

WASHINGTON, DC – Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (D-MD) announced that the Energy and Water Appropriations for FY 2008, which passed the House today, includes \$38,465,000 for several projects important to the environmental and economic health of Maryland and the Fifth District. Funding for all projects listed below was included at Rep. Hoyer's request.

"These projects will make significant environmental and economic improvements to the waterways and natural resources in Maryland," said Congressman Hoyer. "I am pleased that the House made a commitment to improving the access of these waters for all who frequent them for business and recreation."

### **Chesapeake Bay Oyster Recovery - \$1.5 million**

Unfortunately, due to disease, pollution, and over fishing, oyster populations in the Chesapeake Bay are only about two percent of their levels just a century ago. In the last few years, a consensus has emerged in the scientific community that in order to restore the overall health of the Chesapeake Bay, oyster restoration must be undertaken on a much larger scale. The Corps of Engineers' Oyster Recovery Project is working to create both managed harvest reserves and oyster sanctuaries, which will help create a fresh supply of oysters in the Bay. The oyster reef structures that will be created thanks to this effort will provide critical habitat and feeding grounds for other essential species and will also serve as natural filters screening out algae, sediments, and pollutants.

### **Chesapeake Bay Environmental Restoration & Protection Program - \$500,000**

The Chesapeake Bay Watershed continues to face serious environmental challenges. Over the past two decades, federal, state, and local partners have worked together to produce modest restoration gains, but stronger action is required to reduce the region's nutrient and sediment loads to the Bay and restore the health of this magnificent estuary. This investment will significantly bolster efforts at the national and regional levels to restore this treasure and ultimately improve the quality of life for the 16 million citizens who live in the watershed.

### **Anacostia River Comprehensive Plan - \$500,000**

As the lead Federal agency in water resource management, the Army Corps of Engineers plays a vital role in the restoration of the Anacostia River and its tributaries. In the early 1990's, the Corps completed a study of the present and future uses and problems of the Anacostia River's water and related land resources. Since then, the Corps has undertaken or participated in a variety of projects in the watershed, including the beneficial use of dredged materials, removal

of fish passage blockages, and wetlands restoration. The quality of the watershed continues to improve greatly with these and efforts conducted by local, State, and other Federal agencies. Funding will enable the Corps to develop an updated comprehensive plan for the Anacostia River in cooperation with local, State, and Federal stakeholders.

### **Parish Creek - \$60,000**

This funding will aid in the engineering and design for the dredging of the 4,010 foot Parish Creek Federal Navigation Project in Anne Arundel County. The project was last dredged in 1987 and has shoaled to a controlling depth of 5.5 feet at mean lower low water. This has significantly impeded the abilities of local watermen, marina operators, and recreational boaters.

### **St. Jerome Creek - \$100,000**

St. Jerome Creek is located in St. Mary's County, Maryland, along the western shore of the Chesapeake Bay between St. Jerome Neck and Fresh Pond Neck. The existing Federal navigation channel begins to shoal below the authorized depth two years after dredging and restricts the ability of local recreational boaters, watermen, charter boat operators, and others to exit and enter the waterways during periods of low tide. This funding will help fund the construction of jetties that would keep the channel clear and reduce the dredging need from a two year cycle to a ten year cycle.

### **Paint Branch Restoration - \$2.7 million**

The Paint Branch, a tributary of the Anacostia River, has become blocked to spawning fish because of a Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission sewer main that was installed (properly) several decades ago, and has become exposed in recent years because of the degradation of the stream. In some places the stream has moved as much as 150 feet laterally from its original banks, causing major erosion along the course of the stream. The Army Corps of Engineers proposes to return the stream to its original banks, take measures to control its flow to prevent future erosion, and restore riparian buffers upstream to prevent further erosion and exacerbation of the problem.

### **Baltimore Harbor Maintenance Dredging - \$19,500,000**

The Baltimore Harbor presently supports nearly 126,000 jobs in the State of Maryland and generates more than \$1.4 billion for the State and regional economies. Each year, extensive

dredging of approximately 2.5 million cubic yards of material is removed to maintain the 35' and 50' deep channels in the Baltimore District. This funding will support this massive project, which is vital to ensure the viability of Baltimore as a major port.

### **Poplar Island beneficial use project - \$13,605,000**

This project, which will help address the critical issue of disposal of dredge materials from the Baltimore Harbor, is also the largest environmental restoration project undertaken by the Army Corps of Engineers. When completed, this project will yield an 1100-acre wildlife sanctuary, including wetlands and bird nesting habitats.

The bipartisan-supported bill also invests \$3 billion - \$1 billion more than the President's request – to research and develop alternative energies and promote energy efficiency technologies that will ultimately spare consumers from increasing energy and gas prices and reduce harmful carbon emissions contributing to global warming. In addition, the legislation includes tough new accountability measures to root out waste, fraud and abuse in government contracting and includes measures to make our country safer - providing additional funding for the Army Corps of Engineers to fill the gaps in flood protection highlighted by Hurricane Katrina, and for nuclear non-proliferation to keep these dangerous weapons out of the hands of terrorists.

The Energy and Water Appropriations bill must now be reconciled with the Senate appropriations bill, before returning to the House for a final vote.

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